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ENG 5005-001: Nineteenth century British literature

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Selling Sentiment: The Novel, Theories of Affect, and Empire

This course is designed for the advanced study of major developments in the novel, theories of emotion, and political economy. The course examines the rise of modern market culture from the eighteenth through the nineteenth centuries. Starting with the premise that novels not only gave generic shape to readers’ consumer expectations, but also popularized a new and rampant cult of feeling, the course asks questions about identity that are highly relevant to today’s conceptions of consumer identity. After all, this is the era when “shopping ‘til you drop” becomes a common middle-class activity.

This is when everyone from the servant girl to the queen of France seemed to desire sumptuous goods, when the explosion in international trade and colonial exploit became motive for Adam Smith to articulate “political economy,” and when characters spending themselves into ruin became a staple plot in novels. The emerging consumer market culture and developments in empire-building depended upon individuals attaching emotional importance to the things that they bought and took. Thus we need to ask how people articulated their feelings about spending money as well as tears. The novels, poetry, treatises, manifestos, and essays of the period underscore a vexed relationship that is central to understanding market culture: the uncomfortably close proximity of faceless anonymity (this consumer good could be bought by anyone with enough money) and striking singularity (this particular understanding of a literary character is owned by only one unique reader).

Through our study of narrative, poetry, essays, philosophical and political theories of capital and the morality of emotions, we will ask how readers conceived of themselves as consumers. How did they see themselves as buyers of books, clothing, dainties at the table, entertainment, and estate improvements? What did consumerism and colonial interest look like in nineteenth-century London, arguably the birthplace of modern capitalism? What happened when spending spun out of control—from the middle classes to the monarchy? We will study works by writers including, but not limited to, Frances Burney, Jane Austen, Walter Scott, George Eliot, Anthony Trollope, the Brontës, Thomas Hardy, Adam Smith, Karl Marx, Joseph Schumpeter, Gérard Genette, Deidre Lynch, Alex Woloch, and Anne-Lise François.

Texts

Reading
As this is a graduate-level literature course, there will be reading aplenty. I expect every member of our class to keep up with the reading and be prepared for seminar discussion. There will be approximately 100-150 pages of fiction and roughly 50 pages of literary criticism or theory per week. Keep up by pacing yourself. Even with 150 pages of nineteenth-century prose to read every week, for example, this would mean only 30 pages for each of 5 days.

I have placed several essays and fictional excerpts on e-Reserves for our class. You will need to print out and bring each assigned reading to class.

Requirements
Participation in seminar discussion (20%)
Short writing assignments and class presentation (20%)
Essay One (20%)
Essay Two (40%)

LATE POLICY: Essays—and all other assignments—are due at the beginning of class.

1) Late essays will be marked a full grade lower for every day late. Essays turned in a week past the deadline will be given a “zero.”
2) Short at-home writing assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class. Late ones will not be accepted.
3) In-class writing assignments and quizzes must be turned in by the end of class, and cannot be “made up” at a later date.

EMAILING POLICY: I want to get to know you and your work this semester. Thus I ask that you call me or stop by my office during office hours (or other scheduled times) so that we can talk. DO NOT EMAIL ME TO ASK FOR AN “UPDATE” ON MISSED ASSIGNMENTS, OR TO EXPLAIN AN ABSENCE. Working groups will be assigned so that you can contact group members for notes and missed work.

ESSAY FORMAT: Your paper should be paper-clipped. It must include page numbers. Format: 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with one-inch margins.

Plagiarism
Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade on the assignment, if not for the course. I will follow the departmental policy on plagiarism:

“Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—“The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s own original work” (Random House Dictionary of the English Language)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignments, of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.”

Submit your papers using correct MLA (Modern Language Association) format.
Professor Park / English 5005-001: Schedule of Classes, first half of the semester—subject to revision

I will distribute the schedule for the second half of the semester at a later date.

WEEK ONE
Tuesday 1/8
Introductions; the rise of the novel
--Jeremy Bentham, from Panopticon; or, The Inspection-House (1787)
--Adam Smith, from The Theory of Moral Sentiments (1759)

WEEK TWO
1/15
--William Godwin, Things As They Are; or, the Adventures of Caleb Williams (1794):
   Editor’s Introduction
   Volume I (pp. 55-175)
--Michel Foucault, from Discipline and Punish—handout
--Peter Brooks, “Reading for the Plot”—in Essentials of the Theory of Fiction
--John Bender, “Impersonal Violence: The Penetrating Gaze and the Field of Narration in Caleb Williams” (from Vision and Textuality)—e-Reserves

WEEK THREE
1/22
--Caleb Williams
   Volume II in part (pp. 179-294)—skip pp. 297-407
   Volume III in part (pp. 408-434)
   Appendix A (pp. 435-50): 1) original manuscript ending and 2) Preface to Fleetwood (1832)
--Adela Pinch, “Emotional Extravagance” (from Strange Fits of Passion)—e-Reserves

WEEK FOUR
1/29
--Frances Burney, from The Wanderer; or, Female Difficulties (1814)—e-Reserves
--Adela Pinch, “Sentimentality and Experience in Charlotte Smith’s Sonnets” (from Strange Fits of Passion)—e-Reserves
--Deidre Lynch, “Romantic Period Reading Relations” (from The Economy of Character)—e-Reserves

WEEK FIVE
2/5
--Alex Woloch, The One vs. the Many: Introduction (pp. 12-42)
--E.M. Forster, “Flat and Round Characters”—in Essentials of the Theory of Fiction
--Walter Scott, from The Heart of Midlothian (1818), pages to be announced
--William Wordsworth, from The Prelude: 1) 1799 Prelude, Part One, lines 1-374 2) 1805 Prelude, Book 7 (London), lines 589-741
--Amanda Foreman, Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire: introduction, Ch. 3 (43-60), Ch. 20 (317-29), Epilogue (372-85)

WEEK SIX
2/12
--Jane Austen, Mansfield Park: Volume I (pp. 35-190)
--Anne-Lise François, Open Secrets: “Toward a Theory of Recessive Action” in part (pp. 1-38)
--Deidre Lynch, “Jane Austen and the Social Machine” (from The Economy of Character)—e-Reserves

WEEK SEVEN
2/19
--Mansfield Park: Volume II (pp. 193-314)
--Anne-Lise François, Open Secrets: “Fanny’s Labor of Privacy” in part (pp. 218-34)
--Edward Said, from Culture and Imperialism
--Susan Fraiman, “Jane Austen and Edward Said: Gender, Culture, and Imperialism,” Critical Inquiry 21 (Summer 1995)—JSTOR

WEEK EIGHT
2/26
--Mansfield Park: Volume III (pp. 317-468)
--Anne-Lise François, Open Secrets: “Fanny’s Labor of Privacy” in part (pp. 234-68)

WEEK NINE
3/4
--CONFERENCES—PAPER ONE DUE

WEEK TEN
SPRING RECESS—NO CLASS
GRADING CRITERIA FOR ASSIGNMENTS

"A" Range: Outstanding. Original and creative ideas developed exceptionally well. Assignment is flawlessly revised and proofread.

Content:
- a persuasive, insightful presentation of your own ideas that excels in responding to the assignment
- clearly sets up reader expectations (frontloads main ideas and information)
- introduction sets up argument and direction of the report
- conclusion considers the ramifications of the central idea (answers the question, "So what?")

Organization:
- clearly stated and specific thesis or central idea
- body paragraphs are unified, organized, and coherent
- written and graphical cues provide a roadmap and signal the information that follows
- evidence is not cited properly

Evidence:
- appropriate use of evidence to prove and flesh out the central idea
- evidence followed by a thorough analysis that shows how it is critical
- correct documentation of sources

Style:
- language is clear and concise with few grammatical or stylistic errors
- word choice is precise and appropriately specific
- strong, lively, and distinctive tone and voice throughout
- sentences demonstrate problems in inconsistent tone and voice

B" Range: Displays sound understanding of the topic, some originality, and a sense of the issues involved in writing a persuasive report, rather than mere exposition; proofreading needed, mostly finished; may have one or two of the following problems:

Content:
- structure and argument are clear, but ideas lack depth and/or detail
- does not progress much beyond cliched ideas
- topic needs more analysis

Organization:
- does not adequately or consistently set up reader expectations
- important ideas and information are not frontloaded
- central idea is vague, difficult to understand and/or to prove
- introduction does not set up direction of argument clearly
- body paragraphs do not follow logically from central idea
- body paragraphs are not unified, organized, coherent
- conclusion merely restates or summarizes the central idea

Evidence:
- too little evidence to prove and flesh out the central idea
- evidence not integrated properly
- evidence needs to be analyzed more thoroughly
- evidence is not cited properly

Style:
- a number of grammatical or stylistic errors (including vague, repetitious, or colloquial word choice; shifting tenses; wordy or convoluted sentences; punctuation problems)
- tone and voice either too stilted and formal or too casual for a college-level report

"C" Range: Displays either an uneven performance (serious flaws of comprehension and/or presentation); competent exposition without a real attempt at thinking through the assignment; further revision needed; essay has not been proofread; may have three of the problems outlined in the "B" range and/or:

Content:
- no thesis or discernible argument
- depends on cliches, rather than analysis, of the topic
- inadequate coverage of the topic; does not clearly address needs of the audience

Organization:
- introduction too vague, dull, confusing
- no roadmap or written and graphical cues
- conclusion overly general, repetitious, obvious, weak
- body paragraphs demonstrate problems with development/organization, which interfere with development of main ideas

Evidence:
- few relevant pieces of evidence; little actual analysis
- too much irrelevant evidence; no actual analysis

Style:
- sentences demonstrate problems with sentence boundaries (fragments, comma splices, run-ons)
- word choice often imprecise
- inconsistent tone and voice

"D" Range: Paper is off-topic (does not answer an assigned or approved topic; displays fundamental misunderstanding of the topic); major revising needed, reads like a first draft; has three or more of the problems outlined in the "C" range; or does not fulfill page requirements.

"F": No report submitted, report has been plagiarized (incorporates another author's ideas or language without acknowledgment; or actually written by someone else).

COMMENTS: